

(j) Notwithstanding any provision in these regulations to the contrary, no review, reconciliation, monitoring, or other like process that results in a redetermination by ONRR of value under this section shall be considered final or binding as against the Indian Tribes or allottees until the audit period is formally closed.

(k) Certain information submitted to ONRR to support valuation proposals, including transportation, coal washing, or other allowances pursuant to §§1206.457 through 1206.461 and §1206.464 of this subpart, is exempted from disclosure by the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 522. Any data specified by the Act to be privileged, confidential, or otherwise exempt shall be maintained in a confidential manner in accordance with applicable law and regulations. All requests for information about determinations made under this part are to be submitted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act regulation of the Department of the Interior, 43 CFR part 2. Nothing in this section is intended to limit or diminish in any manner whatsoever the right of an Indian lessor to obtain any and all information as such lessor may be lawfully entitled from ONRR or such lessor's lessee directly under the terms of the lease or applicable law.

[61 FR 5481, Feb. 12, 1996, as amended at 66 FR 45769, Aug. 30, 2001]

§ 1206.457 Washing allowances—general.

(a) For ad valorem leases subject to §1206.456 of this subpart, ONRR shall, as authorized by this section, allow a deduction in determining value for royalty purposes for the reasonable, actual costs incurred to wash coal, unless the value determined pursuant to §1206.456 of this subpart was based upon like-quality unwashed coal. Under no circumstances will the authorized washing allowance and the transportation allowance reduce the value for royalty purposes to zero.

(b) If ONRR determines that a lessee has improperly determined a washing allowance authorized by this section, then the lessee shall be liable for any additional royalties, plus interest determined in accordance with §1218.202

of this chapter, or shall be entitled to a credit, without interest.

(c) Lessees shall not disproportionately allocate washing costs to Indian leases.

(d) No cost normally associated with mining operations and which are necessary for placing coal in marketable condition shall be allowed as a cost of washing.

(e) Coal washing costs shall only be recognized as allowances when the washed coal is sold and royalties are reported and paid.

[61 FR 5481, Feb. 12, 1996, as amended at 64 FR 43289, Aug. 10, 1999]

§ 1206.458 Determination of washing allowances.

(a) *Arm's-length contracts.* (1) For washing costs incurred by a lessee pursuant to an arm's-length contract, the washing allowance shall be the reasonable actual costs incurred by the lessee for washing the coal under that contract, subject to monitoring, review, audit, and possible future adjustment. ONRR' prior approval is not required before a lessee may deduct costs incurred under an arm's-length contract. However, before any deduction may be taken, the lessee must submit a completed page one of Form ONRR-4292, Coal Washing Allowance Report, in accordance with paragraph (c)(1) of this section. A washing allowance may be claimed retroactively for a period of not more than 3 months prior to the first day of the month that Form ONRR-4292 is filed with ONRR, unless ONRR approves a longer period upon a showing of good cause by the lessee.

(2) In conducting reviews and audits, ONRR will examine whether the contract reflects more than the consideration actually transferred either directly or indirectly from the lessee to the washer for the washing. If the contract reflects more than the total consideration paid, then ONRR may require that the washing allowance be determined in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) If ONRR determines that the consideration paid pursuant to an arm's-

length washing contract does not reflect the reasonable value of the washing because of misconduct by or between the contracting parties, or because the lessee otherwise has breached its duty to the lessor to market the production for the mutual benefit of the lessee and the lessor, then ONRR shall require that the washing allowance be determined in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section. When ONRR determines that the value of the washing may be unreasonable, ONRR will notify the lessee and give the lessee an opportunity to provide written information justifying the lessee's washing costs.

(4) Where the lessee's payments for washing under an arm's-length contract are not based on a dollar-per-unit basis, the lessee shall convert whatever consideration is paid to a dollar value equivalent. Washing allowances shall be expressed as a cost per ton of coal washed.

(b) *Non-arm's-length or no contract.* (1) If a lessee has a non-arm's-length contract or has no contract, including those situations where the lessee performs washing for itself, the washing allowance will be based upon the lessee's reasonable actual costs. All washing allowances deducted under a non-arm's-length or no contract situation are subject to monitoring, review, audit, and possible future adjustment. Prior ONRR approval of washing allowances is not required for non-arm's-length or no contract situations. However, before any estimated or actual deduction may be taken, the lessee must submit a completed Form ONRR-4292 in accordance with paragraph (c)(2) of this section. A washing allowance may be claimed retroactively for a period of not more than 3 months prior to the first day of the month that Form ONRR-4292 is filed with ONRR, unless ONRR approves a longer period upon a showing of good cause by the lessee. ONRR will monitor the allowance deduction to ensure that deductions are reasonable and allowable. When necessary or appropriate, ONRR may direct a lessee to modify its actual washing allowance.

(2) The washing allowance for non-arm's-length or no contract situations shall be based upon the lessee's actual

costs for washing during the reported period, including operating and maintenance expenses, overhead, and either depreciation and a return on undepreciated capital investment in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(A) of this section, or a cost equal to the depreciable investment in the wash plant multiplied by the rate of return in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(B) of this section. Allowable capital costs are generally those for depreciable fixed assets (including costs of delivery and installation of capital equipment) which are an integral part of the wash plant.

(i) Allowable operating expenses include: Operations supervision and engineering; operations labor; fuel; utilities; materials; ad valorem property taxes; rent; supplies; and any other directly allocable and attributable operating expense which the lessee can document.

(ii) Allowable maintenance expenses include: Maintenance of the wash plant; maintenance of equipment; maintenance labor; and other directly allocable and attributable maintenance expenses which the lessee can document.

(iii) Overhead attributable and allocable to the operation and maintenance of the wash plant is an allowable expense. State and Federal income taxes and severance taxes, including royalties, are not allowable expenses.

(iv) A lessee may use either paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(A) or (b)(2)(iv)(B) of this section. After a lessee has elected to use either method for a wash plant, the lessee may not later elect to change to the other alternative without approval of ONRR.

(A) To compute depreciation, the lessee may elect to use either a straight-line depreciation method based on the life of equipment or on the life of the reserves which the wash plant services, whichever is appropriate, or a unit of production method. After an election is made, the lessee may not change methods without ONRR approval. A change in ownership of a wash plant shall not alter the depreciation schedule established by the original operator/lessee

for purposes of the allowance calculation. With or without a change in ownership, a wash plant shall be depreciated only once. Equipment shall not be depreciated below a reasonable salvage value.

(B) ONRR shall allow as a cost an amount equal to the allowable capital investment in the wash plant multiplied by the rate of return determined pursuant to paragraph (b)(2)(v) of this section. No allowance shall be provided for depreciation. This alternative shall apply only to plants first placed in service or acquired after March 1, 1989.

(v) The rate of return shall be the industrial rate associated with Standard and Poor's BBB rating. The rate of return shall be the monthly average rate as published in Standard and Poor's Bond Guide for the first month of the reporting period for which the allowance is applicable and shall be effective during the reporting period. The rate shall be redetermined at the beginning of each subsequent washing allowance reporting period (which is determined pursuant to paragraph (c)(2) of this section).

(3) The washing allowance for coal shall be determined based on the lessee's reasonable and actual cost of washing the coal. The lessee may not take an allowance for the costs of washing lease production that is not royalty bearing.

(c) *Reporting requirements*—(1) *Arm's-length contracts*. (i) With the exception of those washing allowances specified in paragraphs (c)(1)(v) and (c)(1)(vi) of this section, the lessee shall submit page one of the initial Form ONRR-4292 prior to, or at the same time, as the washing allowance determined pursuant to an arm's-length contract is reported on Form ONRR-4430, Solid Minerals Production and Royalty Report. A Form ONRR-4292 received by the end of the month that the Form ONRR-4430 is due shall be considered to be received timely.

(ii) The initial Form ONRR-4292 shall be effective for a reporting period beginning the month that the lessee is first authorized to deduct a washing allowance and shall continue until the end of the calendar year, or until the applicable contract or rate terminates

or is modified or amended, whichever is earlier.

(iii) After the initial reporting period and for succeeding reporting periods, lessees must submit page one of Form ONRR-4292 within 3 months after the end of the calendar year, or after the applicable contract or rate terminates or is modified or amended, whichever is earlier, unless ONRR approves a longer period (during which period the lessee shall continue to use the allowance from the previous reporting period).

(iv) ONRR may require that a lessee submit arm's-length washing contracts and related documents. Documents shall be submitted within a reasonable time, as determined by ONRR.

(v) Washing allowances which are based on arm's-length contracts and which are in effect at the time these regulations become effective will be allowed to continue until such allowances terminate. For the purposes of this section, only those allowances that have been approved by ONRR in writing shall qualify as being in effect at the time these regulations become effective.

(vi) ONRR may establish, in appropriate circumstances, reporting requirements that are different from the requirements of this section.

(2) *Non-arm's-length or no contract*. (i) With the exception of those washing allowances specified in paragraphs (c)(2)(v) and (c)(2)(vii) of this section, the lessee shall submit an initial Form ONRR-4292 prior to, or at the same time as, the washing allowance determined pursuant to a non-arm's-length contract or no contract situation is reported on Form ONRR-4430, Solid Minerals Production and Royalty Report. A Form ONRR-4292 received by the end of the month that the Form ONRR-4430 is due shall be considered to be timely received. The initial reporting may be based on estimated costs.

(ii) The initial Form ONRR-4292 shall be effective for a reporting period beginning the month that the lessee first is authorized to deduct a washing allowance and shall continue until the end of the calendar year, or until the washing under the non-arm's-length contract or the no contract situation terminates, whichever is earlier.

(iii) For calendar-year reporting periods succeeding the initial reporting period, the lessee shall submit a completed Form ONRR-4292 containing the actual costs for the previous reporting period. If coal washing is continuing, the lessee shall include on Form ONRR-4292 its estimated costs for the next calendar year. The estimated coal washing allowance shall be based on the actual costs for the previous period plus or minus any adjustments which are based on the lessee's knowledge of decreases or increases which will affect the allowance. Form ONRR-4292 must be received by ONRR within 3 months after the end of the previous reporting period, unless ONRR approves a longer period (during which period the lessee shall continue to use the allowance from the previous reporting period).

(iv) For new wash plants, the lessee's initial Form ONRR-4292 shall include estimates of the allowable coal washing costs for the applicable period. Cost estimates shall be based upon the most recently available operations data for the plant, or if such data are not available, the lessee shall use estimates based upon industry data for similar coal wash plants.

(v) Washing allowances based on non-arm's-length or no contract situations which are in effect at the time these regulations become effective will be allowed to continue until such allowances terminate. For the purposes of this section, only those allowances that have been approved by ONRR in writing shall qualify as being in effect at the time these regulations become effective.

(vi) Upon request by ONRR, the lessee shall submit all data used by the lessee to prepare its Forms ONRR-4292. The data shall be provided within a reasonable period of time, as determined by ONRR.

(vii) ONRR may establish, in appropriate circumstances, reporting requirements which are different from the requirements of this section.

(3) ONRR may establish coal washing allowance reporting dates for individual leases different from those specified in this subpart in order to provide more effective administration. Lessees will be notified of any change in their reporting period.

(4) Washing allowances must be reported as a separate line on the Form ONRR-4430, unless ONRR approves a different reporting procedure.

(d) *Interest assessments for incorrect or late reports and failure to report.* (1) If a lessee deducts a washing allowance on its Form ONRR-4430 without complying with the requirements of this section, the lessee shall be liable for interest on the amount of such deduction until the requirements of this section are complied with. The lessee also shall repay the amount of any allowance which is disallowed by this section.

(2) If a lessee erroneously reports a washing allowance which results in an underpayment of royalties, interest shall be paid on the amount of that underpayment.

(3) Interest required to be paid by this section shall be determined in accordance with §1218.202 of this chapter.

(e) *Adjustments.* (1) If the actual coal washing allowance is less than the amount the lessee has taken on Form ONRR-4430 for each month during the allowance form reporting period, the lessee shall be required to pay additional royalties due plus interest computed pursuant to §1218.202, retroactive to the first month the lessee is authorized to deduct a washing allowance. If the actual washing allowance is greater than the amount the lessee has estimated and taken during the reporting period, the lessee shall be entitled to a credit, without interest.

(2) The lessee must submit a corrected Form ONRR-4430 to reflect actual costs, together with any payment, in accordance with instructions provided by ONRR.

(f) *Other washing cost determinations.* The provisions of this section shall apply to determine washing costs when establishing value using a net-back valuation procedure or any other procedure that requires deduction of washing costs.

[61 FR 5481, Feb. 12, 1996, as amended at 66 FR 45769, Aug. 30, 2001]

§ 1206.459 Allocation of washed coal.

(a) When coal is subjected to washing, the washed coal must be allocated to the leases from which it was extracted.